

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to recite a coarse-mesh support in view of the Examiner's comment on page 5 of the Office Action that Applicants' argument reproduced on that page was not persuasive because it was not commensurate in scope with the claims.

Entry of the above amendment is respectfully requested. Also, acceptance of the drawings filed with the application is respectfully requested.

Obviousness Rejection

Claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over "Applicant's Admitted Prior Art" ("AAPA") and *The Handbook of Separation Techniques for Chemical Engineers*, 2nd Edition (1988) ("Handbook"), for the same reasons as set forth in the previous Office Action.

In response to this rejection, Applicants submit that the lifetime of the filtration can be extended while keeping high absolute filtration accuracy even for a cellulose acrylate solution having high viscosity, precisely because the cake layer is formed by pre-coating a filter aid to the coarse-mesh support.

In this regard, Applicants note that in the 'Response to Arguments' section of the Office Action, the Examiner stated that Applicants assert that "The present invention solves the above problems in the art by pre-coating a filter aid on a coarse-mesh support and body-feeding the filter aid into the cellulose acrylate solution. Even for a cellulose acrylate solution having high viscosity, the lifetime of the filtration can be extended while keeping high absolute filtration accuracy."

The Examiner indicated that this argument was noted but was not persuasive, since it was not commensurate in scope with the claims.

To resolve this issue, Applicants have amended the claims such that this argument is commensurate in scope with the amended claims.


Accordingly, Applicants submit that this rejection has been overcome, and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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